

**ATO Service Area Restructuring  
Answers to Frequently Asked Questions  
(April 3, 2006)**

**When will individuals be required to move?**

The standup of the new consolidated service areas and the service centers will take place in late June 2006. Leadership will be in place at that time. After the standup, ATO will begin relocating positions to the new Service Centers.

At least 90 days prior to their relocation date, affected employees will be provided an administrative reassignment to the service area. The reassignment will allow employees to retain their base pay and continue employment in the FAA if they choose to relocate. For all employees accepting the transfer, ATO will provide a full Permanent Change of Station (PCS) allowance and determine the reporting timeframe for their relocation to the service center. The target date for completion of employee relocations is December 31, 2006.

**Will my job description change?**

You will continue doing the type of work you were assigned during the in-place standup of the service center. Until the moves are complete, employees will be functionally aligned with their group in the Service Centers/Service Area Offices; however, they will continue to perform their work in their current locations. In most cases, they will continue to work for the same supervisor. A reengineering process is underway to streamline processes and improve system efficiency. The process will continue through 2006. New position descriptions will be issued, as required, as the process progresses. In the meantime, employees will continue to perform under their current position descriptions.

**What is the status of the Voluntary Early Retirement Act (VERA) offer for ATO employees in the regional offices?**

The Voluntary Early Retirement offer for ATO bargaining and non-bargaining unit employees in the regional offices and implementation centers that was announced February 23 has been amended. All bargaining unit employees who occupy positions classified as engineers and architects are now included in the offer. Additionally, all employees now have until Friday, April 28, 2006, to apply and must retire no later than Friday, May 5, 2006. ATO employees who have already applied under the provisions of the February 23, 2006, memorandum need not reapply. The memorandum amending the offer and attachments are available on ATO Online ([www.ato.faa.gov](http://www.ato.faa.gov)) or from the local Human Resource Management Division or Service Area Manager.

**What is discontinued service, who does it pertain to, what are the penalties, and how soon can someone retire under discontinued service?**

Employees who choose not to accept the administrative reassignments may be eligible for discontinued service retirement, if they meet the mandated age and service requirements. Employees should consult with their local Human Resources Management Division for details on this option. .

**Will a buyout be offered to those nearing retirement?**

No buyouts will be offered.

**What will happen if I am not eligible to retire but cannot move?**

For employees who cannot relocate and are not eligible to retire, the options are to consider other employment within the FAA, other Federal agencies, and the private sector. ATO is currently offering Voluntary Early Retirement to eligible employees in the service area offices, and we are setting up an employee information center to provide information about FAA or other government agency vacancies that may exist in the local area for which employees may apply. In this way, we hope to lessen the impact on as many employees as possible as the transition progresses. Eventually, however, employees who decline the administrative reassignment will be subject to involuntary separation.

**When do you plan to provide another briefing to employees?**

We will conduct another round of briefings as follows: Anchorage, April 4; Los Angeles, April 5-6; New York, April 10-11; Burlington, MA, April 12; Chicago, April 18-19; Kansas City, April 20-21; Seattle, May 1; Atlanta, May 3, and Fort Worth, May 8. Members of the ATO Transition Team, FAA Human Resources, and FAA Office of Financial Operations will brief employees on restructuring activities, employee rights, and travel benefits. Information on the time and place of these briefings will be posted in your office and on this website. The local HRMD is also available to discuss the various options with employees in the context of their personal circumstances.

**Because of the AFSS displaced employee rules (Selective Placement Program) all positions must be bid prior to any ERR selections. Will this requirement be lifted to help ATO employees find jobs within their local area?**

There are no plans at this time to change this requirement.

**The notification letter says that the FAA will provide full PCS to permanent employees relocating to the service centers. However it also says that the following items MAY be approved: temporary quarters not to exceed 60 days, a house-hunting trip not to exceed 10 days, and homesale program. The March 7 article on the website says these optional items WILL be approved. Is this a change?**

Nothing has changed (*see next question*). The use of “may” in the letter denotes “optional”, which is a key word in the March 7 article. Some employees may not choose to take advantage of all of the options. Some employees may choose to sell their homes

themselves rather than take advantage of the homesale program. Others may not want or need to spend 60 days in temporary quarters. But for those who want these options, ATO will provide them.

**Will PCS be offered to those moving? Will this include relocation services (e.g., home sale program)?**

Yes. FAA will provide full PCS (see below) to permanent employees relocating to the service centers as a result of an administrative reassignment. In addition, the following optional items will also be available:

- Temporary quarters not to exceed 60 calendar days, and
- A house-hunting trip not to exceed 10 calendar days
- Homesale Program

The policy governing PCS is contained in Chapter 302 of the FAA Travel Policy (FAATP). If you are a bargaining unit member, consult your collective bargaining unit agreement for additional PCS information. The following website provides links to general PCS travel information as well as the FAATP, <http://pcs.faa.gov>.

As stated in the FAATP, section 302-1, 101, full PCS includes:

- En route transportation for employee and family (usually mileage)
- En route per diem for employee and family
- Transportation of household goods (18,000 lbs Maximum)
- Temporary storage of household goods (maximum initial period of 90 days)
- Real estate expenses associated with sale of home (allowable up to 10% of the sale price or \$50,000, whichever is less)
- Real estate expenses associated with purchase of new residence at the duty station (allowable up to 5% of the purchase price or a maximum of \$25,000 whichever is less)
- Miscellaneous expense allowance
- Relocation income tax allowance
- Home marketing incentive payments

**Can an employee bid for an unfilled position at a service center, which would be an upgrade (ex. I to J band), and still be eligible for PCS funds?**

The vacancy announcement will specify who may apply and if PCS benefits will be provided.

**Will all current managers and supervisors (permanent & acting) be allowed to bid on the group manager positions?**

The following group manager positions are now open for bid and are posted on the FAA jobs website: <http://jobs.faa.gov/allfaajobs.htm>.

- Manager, Safety Assurance Group, FV-2186-L (Id 84712)
- Manager, Systems Support Group, FV-2186-L, (Id 84713)
- Manager, Planning and Requirements, FV-2186-L, (Id 84681)
- Manager, Business Services Group, FV-340-K, (Id 84873)
- Manager, Administrative Services Group, FV-340-K (Id 84870)

According to the announcement, the positions are open to ATO in-grade and downgrade candidates only, and to former FAA employees eligible for selective placement program consideration. Bids will be accepted for the three L-Band positions through April 13. The closing date for the K-Band positions is April 17.

### **Is telecommuting going to be an option?**

Telecommuting is an option that is granted to the employee by his or her supervisor based on factors involving both the individual and the position. According to agency policy, it is the supervisor who decides whether or not telecommuting is suitable and appropriate for both the individual and the position. With telecommuting, the employee is expected to spend some portion of each workweek in his or her assigned workplace. Telecommuting should not be confused with detached staff assignments, where the employee's position may be assigned to one location, such as the regional office, but the duty station is elsewhere.

The Design Team looked at various organizational models for both government and industry. The model selected is a best practices "shared services" model that combines and collocates legacy staff support functions in a single, integrated support office resident in each ATO Service Area. There are many different elements to the model, but one key facet is the leveraging of natural groupings of expertise to provide the Center of Excellence required for a performance-based organization. Implementing this concept requires grouping of functional expertise in a central location. The team looked at different levels of grouping/collocation with sensitivity to the impact relocation has on employees. The goal was a balance between increased efficiency/cost savings and minimizing adverse employee impacts. The model chosen results in minimum movement (less than ten percent) of all employees.

**If an employee receives a reassignment notice that includes a paid PCS move but is selected for a temporary position, will that employee be allowed to retain the position he or she was reassigned to and/or their paid PCS move upon conclusion of temporary position? In other words, will they have a job waiting for them when the temporary job is over and a PCS to help them to get there?**

If an employee's permanent position is moving, the employee will be expected to report to his or her new location within the time frame outlined in the administrative reassignment letter. A temporary assignment does not exempt an employee from the effects of the realignment.